

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 043353

FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE

FOLLOWING REPEAT MEXICO 1689 SENT SECSTATE FOR ACTION DTD
25 FEB 75.
QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 1689

S/NM FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE
DEPARTMENT PASS DEA HDQS - EOI FOR CUSACK

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR, MX
SUBJECT: OPERATION CLEARVIEW/SEAM 75: WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS FOR
FEBRUARY 14-20, 1975

REF: MEXICO 1386

1. ERADICATION AND INTERDICTION SUMMARY

A. IN THE MOUNTAINS OF SINALOA, OPIUM POPPIES ARE IN FULL
BLOOM AS FARMERS LANCE THE MATURE BULBS AND HARVEST THE GUM;
THE MEXICAN OPIUM PRODUCING SEASON IS IN FULL SWING. AT THE
PRESENT RATE OF DESTRUCTION, IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO DESTROY
ALL THE PLANTATIONS BEFORE THEY CAN BE HARVESTED.

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B. THE AMOUNT OF TIME PREVIOUSLY ESTIMATED TO ACCOMPLISH

DESTRUCTION OF POPPY FIELDS IN EXISTENCE WAS ABOUT FORTY-TWO WEEKS. BECAUSE OF INCREASED EFFICIENCY ON THE PART OF THE VARIOUS GROUPS ENGAGED IN THE DESTRUCTION OPERATION, THE FIGURE IS NOW ESTIMATED TO BE ABOUT TWENTY-EIGHT WEEKS. BECAUSE THE POPPIES ARE NOW BLOOMING AND BEING LANCED, AND BECAUSE MANY FIELDS WILL ESCAPE DESTRUCTION, A LARGE QUANTITY OF OPIUM GUM WILL HAVE BEEN EXTRACTED BY THE END OF THE CAMPAIGN. TO AVOID THIS, ANY SUCH DESTRUCTION CAMPAIGN SHOULD ATTEMPT TO DESTROY MORE POPPIES EARLIER IN THE CAMPAIGN BEFORE THE PLANTS BECOME MATURE. THIS WOULD NECESSITATE EITHER THE ADDITION OF MORE TROOPS TO ACCOMPLISH THE DESTRUCTION OR THE INTRODUCTION OF MORE EFFICIENT METHODS OF DESTRUCTION.

C. ON FEBRUARY 20, 1975, THE MEXICAN ATTORNEY GENERAL, PEDRO OJEDA PAULLADA, IS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN CULIACAN, SINALOA, TO OFFICIALLY INAUGURATE THE DESTRUCTION CAMPAIGN. MEXICAN OFFICIALS ARE PLANNING TO PRESENT HIM WITH SO MUCH WINDOW DRESSING AND WHITEWASH THAT HE WILL NOT GET TO SEE CERTAIN FAILURES OF THE OPERATION OR HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS SOME OF THE PROBLEMS HAMPERING THE CAMPAIGN.

D. HELICOPTER MAINTENANCE AND CONTROL CONTINUE TO BE THE MAJOR OBSTACLES TO EFFICIENT ERADICATION DURING THE PRESENT CAMPAIGN. WITHOUT AIRCRAFT SUPPORT, THE ERADICATION CAMPAIGN RETURNS TO ITS FORMER ANTIQUATED PACE.

E. AMONG OTHER PROBLEMS WAITING TO BE RESOLVED IS THAT MANY OF THE COLUMNS OF TROOPS ENGAGED IN DESTRUCTION HAVE LOST MUCH OF THEIR EFFECTIVENESS BECAUSE THEY HAVE BECOME ALMOST TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON THE TROOP-FERRYING HELICOPTERS NOW DOWN FOR REPAIRS AND INSPECTION.

2. STATISTICS

A. ERADICATION STATISTICS FOR WEEK

UNAVAILABLE AT CLOSE OF REPORTING PERIOD, ALTHOUGH IMPRESSION EXISTED THAT ERADICATION WAS PROCEEDING AT A MORE RAPID RATE THAN IN EARLIER WEEKS.

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B. CUMULATIVE ERADICATION STATISTICS (FOR PERIOD THROUGH FEBRUARY 18)

OPIUM POPPIES

PLANATATIONS DESTROYED 1,224

SQUARE METERS UNDER CULTIVATION DESTROYED - 2,869,289M

TOTAL INDIVIDUAL PLANTS DESTROYED - 94,816,079

MARIJUANA

PLANTATIONS DESTROYED - 944

SQUARE METERS UNDER CULTIVATION DESTROYED - 2,558,011M(2)

TOTAL INDIVIDUAL PLANTS DESTROYED - 109,470,815

MIXED PLANTATIONS (MARIJUANA AND POPPIES)

PLANTATIONS DESTROYED - 97

SQUARE METERS UNDER CULTIVATION DESTROYED - 620,457M (2)

TOTAL INDIVIDUAL PLANTS DESTROYED - 28,000,813

C. INTERDICTION STATISTICS FOR WEEK

ROADBLOCKS WERE GENERALLY UNPRODUCTIVE, ALTHOUGH ONE RESULTING INVESTIGATION NETTED NEARLY 11 KG. OF HEROIN (IN MEXICALI).

D. CUMULATIVE INTERDICTION STATISTICS

118 ARRESTS

34 VEHICLES SEIZED

3 LIGHT AIRPLANES SEIZED

57 TONS OF MARIJUANA SEIZED AND/OR DESTROYED

12.975 KILOGRAMS OF HEROIN SEIZED

15 KILOGRAMS OF HEROIN IN PROCESS DESTROYED

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3 LITERS OF OPIUM CONCENTRATE DESTROYED

12 KILOGRAMS OF OPIUM GUM SEIZED

520 GRAMS OF COCAINE SEIZED

28.120 KILOGRAMS OF POPPY SEEDS DESTROYED

93 RIFLES, SHOTGUNS, AND HANDGUNS SEIZED

1 HAND GRENADE SEIZED

2,000 ROUNDS OF AMMUNITION SEIZED

E. HEROIN LABORATORIES

7 SEIZED THUS FAR IN CAMPAIGN.

3. COMMENT: THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TOLD AMBASSADOR JOVA ON FEBRUARY 20 THAT HE DID PLAN TO TALK TO THE PILOTS AND POLICE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE CAMPAIGN, TO GAIN THEIR FIRST-HAND IMPRESSIONS,

CRITICISMS AND COMPLAINTS. WHILE MORALE AND ENERGY REMAINS HIGH,
LACK OF HELICOPTER SUPPORT HAS IMPROVED LITTLE SINCE LAST
WEEK'S REPORT (MEXICO 1386). WE UNDERSTAND THAT MANY SHIPS
ARE DOWN FOR WANT OF RELATIVELY SMALL) INEXPENSIVE PARTS.
DEA IS FACILITATING DELIVERY OF THESE PARTS BY USING
THEIR OWN AIRCRAFT TO TRANSPORT PARTS (AS WELL AS ARMS AND
AMMO) DIRECTLY FROM BORDER TO CULIACAN. IF ALL GOES WELL,
MORE HELICOPTERS SHOULD BE IN THE AIR BY THE END OF THIS WEEK.
FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM REMAINS PAROCHIAL ATTITUDE AND LACK OF
SYSTEM IN ATTORNEY GENERAL'S ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE. THIS
SHOULD IMPROVE AS BELL LOGISTICS SPECIALISTS ESTABLISH
THEMSELVES AND PARTS INVENTORY BUILDS UP. END COMMENT.
JOVAUNQUOTE
KISSINGER

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